



St Mary's CE Primary School

'Nurturing Success'



Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy

Date reviewed: June 2025
Date due for review: June 2026

At St Mary's, we are committed to nurturing every child (and every adult) as a unique individual to be the best that they can be, within a safe, friendly and welcoming community rooted in Christian values. Our vision is to provide an education of the highest quality through a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which focuses on the development of the whole person. We want children to develop as happy, confident and articulate individuals who will love learning throughout their lives.

Our RSHE Policy is shaped by our vision which seeks to promote and celebrate all that is good and unique in every individual within our community. As it says in Philippians 4:

Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Our school Christian values of friendship, respect, trust, hope, wisdom and perseverance are at the heart of our positive and nurturing approach and underpin our relationships with others and our practice.

As a Church of England School, the belief that each person is created in God's image is accepted and the uniqueness of the individual celebrated. We welcome diversity and celebrate difference and we treat each other with dignity and respect. This policy is supportive of these beliefs and everything we do is underpinned by our belief that everyone should be able to flourish in our caring school.

Our RSHE Policy links to other key school policies including our Behaviour Policy, Strategic Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy and Equality Policy. The policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including the Equality Act (2010), DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RSHE) is an essential part of the curriculum when preparing children for their lives now, as they develop and mature, and for the future as adults and parents. The school aims to create an environment in which children are able to learn and understand the values, standards and responsibilities of the individual within society as global citizens, and develop an appreciation of the relationships which underpin daily life. RSHE forms part of the overall policy on Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship and draws on elements of science taught through the National Curriculum and on Religious Education.

What does RSE mean?

In the *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* Guidance document (2020), RSHE is defined in the following way:

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.”

(Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education DFE 2020)

Relationships Education

The focus for relationships education at St Mary’s CE Primary School is teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

Relationships Education is learning about how to:

- be appreciative of existing relationships
- to form new healthy relationships
- to enjoy strong positive, non-exploitative, caring relationships online and in person.

This will particularly reference family relationships including marriage, friendships and relationships with peers and adults.

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Families and people who care for me

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other’s lives.
- that others’ families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children’s families are also characterised by love and care.
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children’s security as they grow up.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring Friendships

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.

- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful Relationships

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online Relationships

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being Safe

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Sex Education

For Primary Schools, sex education is not mandatory. **In St Mary's Church of England Primary School we have decided that it is important to use the correct names for external genitalia when talking to children about their bodies (EYFS- Y6) and to teach how a baby is conceived and born to Year 6 pupils in order to protect and prepare them for the future.** Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from this aspect of sex education and can do so by applying in writing to the Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum and Assessment or the Headteacher. We will invite you to talk through your concerns, we will explain our rationale for RSHE and invite you to review the materials we hope to use. Withdrawing your child from sex education remains a statutory right as a parent or legal guardian.

Links to the Science Curriculum (statutory)

The National Curriculum for Science includes content on human development, including reproduction. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw from this aspect of the curriculum.

Animals, including humans

Pupils should be taught to:

Year 1: identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense

Year 2: notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

Year 5: describe the changes as humans develop to old age

Living things and their habitats

Pupils should be taught to:

Year 5: describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird

Year 5: describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals

Health Education

Health Education is learning about physical health and mental wellbeing, so pupils can make wise choices to ensure their own flourishing and the flourishing of others.¹ It is about learning to be in a healthy relationship with themselves and how to look after themselves and keep themselves safe.

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Mental Wellbeing

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.

¹ See "Mental Health and Wellbeing: Towards a Whole School Approach" March 2018

- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

Internet safety and harms

- that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness

- the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).
- how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Healthy Eating

- what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

Health and prevention

- how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
- about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.

Basic First Aid

- how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

Changing Adolescent Body

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

Further information about RSHE at St Mary's CE Primary School

Who is responsible for teaching RSHE?

At St Mary's all staff bear a shared responsibility for teaching RSHE since, by definition, teaching opportunities could arise at any time, for example at playtimes. However, focused RSHE sessions are led by class teachers as part of the PSHE and science curriculum. In Year 5, the school nurse also works with the girls to support in the aspects outlined in the 'Changing Adolescent Body' section of the DfE guidance.

In Year 6, the school nurse helps the children to develop their understanding of how to manage changes which happen during puberty and how babies are made and are given the opportunity to ask questions about this. Parents are informed of this prior to it taking place and given the option to view resources, to ask any further questions and to withdraw their child from the aspect which relates to how babies are made.

Other outside agencies may also be involved when additional professional or specialist support is considered to be of benefit to the children's understanding of particular topics.

Equalities/Inclusion

“Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.”

(Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education DFE 2020)

St Mary’s is an inclusive school. All learners will be included in RSHE with teaching tailored to meet their individual needs. Advice from the SENCO will be sought if required and further support may be provided from outside agencies.

The school recognizes that some parents and carers of children with special educational needs may find it difficult to accept their children’s developing sexuality and that some pupils will be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers, and others may be confused about what is acceptable public behaviour. The school will provide support for these children so that they are able to develop skills to reduce the risks of being abused and exploited, and to learn what sorts of behaviour are, and are not, acceptable.

The role of parents in RSHE

Parents are the key people in:

- teaching their children about sex and relationships;
- maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;
- helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up;
- preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

St Mary’s sex and relationship education programme will complement and support these parental roles and parents have been actively involved in the determination of the school’s policy. St Mary’s operates an ‘open door’ policy and parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns or questions they may have about the school’s RSHE programme at any time.

How was this policy developed?

The school seeks to work in partnership with all stakeholders. Parents, governors and school staff have developed this policy through a consultative process.

Staff and Governor Training in RSHE

Staff and governor development is addressed as required. When applicable, staff development may involve LA courses, in-house training or external speakers.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

Day to day monitoring is the responsibility of the RSHE/PSHE Leader. Continuous monitoring and reporting to the governing body will be part of the Leadership Team review systems. All staff and governors will regularly monitor to determine the effectiveness of the Policy and its impact upon children.